2026 TOWN ELECTIONS

Winchester 2026 town election guide

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This is a comprehensive, nonpartisan guide to the March 21, 2026 annual town election in Winchester, Massachusetts, produced as a collaboration between the League of Women Voters of Winchester and Winchester News. It is a living document. Content is added and updated as information becomes available. Neither the League of Women Voters of Winchester nor Winchester News supports or opposes any political party or candidate.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WINCHESTER

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Election at a glance

The annual town election will take place Friday, March 21, giving Winchester voters the opportunity to choose officeholders who set policy, oversee town departments and manage the municipal budget. Po
open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Winchester High School cafete

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Skillings Road, which will serve as the central polling location for all eight precincts.

How to vote

Register to vote: Voters must be registered by March 11, 2026. Registration status can be checked through the state's online voter registration system.

Vote by mail: Applications for vote by mail ballots are accepted and processed upon receipt. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. March 16, 2026. Ballots must be completed and returned by 8 p.m. March 21, 2026 to be counted.

Absentee voting: Absentee ballots are available for voters who will be absent from town on election day or who qualify due to disability or religious belief. Ballots can be cast in the town clerk's office beginning March 2. The deadline to apply for an absentee ballot is noon March 20. Completed ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. March 21 to be counted. Applications and instructions are available through the Winchester annual election page.

Early voting in person: Early voting will be held at Town Hall, Winchester Room, first floor, 71 Mt. Vernon St. The schedule is as follows:

Day / Date	Hours
Saturday, March 14	9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Monday, March 16	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Tuesday, March 17	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Wednesday, March 18	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursday, March 19	8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Day / Date	Hours
Friday, March 20	8 a.m. to noon

Voting on election day: Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 21, 2026 at Winchester High School cafeteria, 80 Skillings Road. All eight precincts will vote at this central

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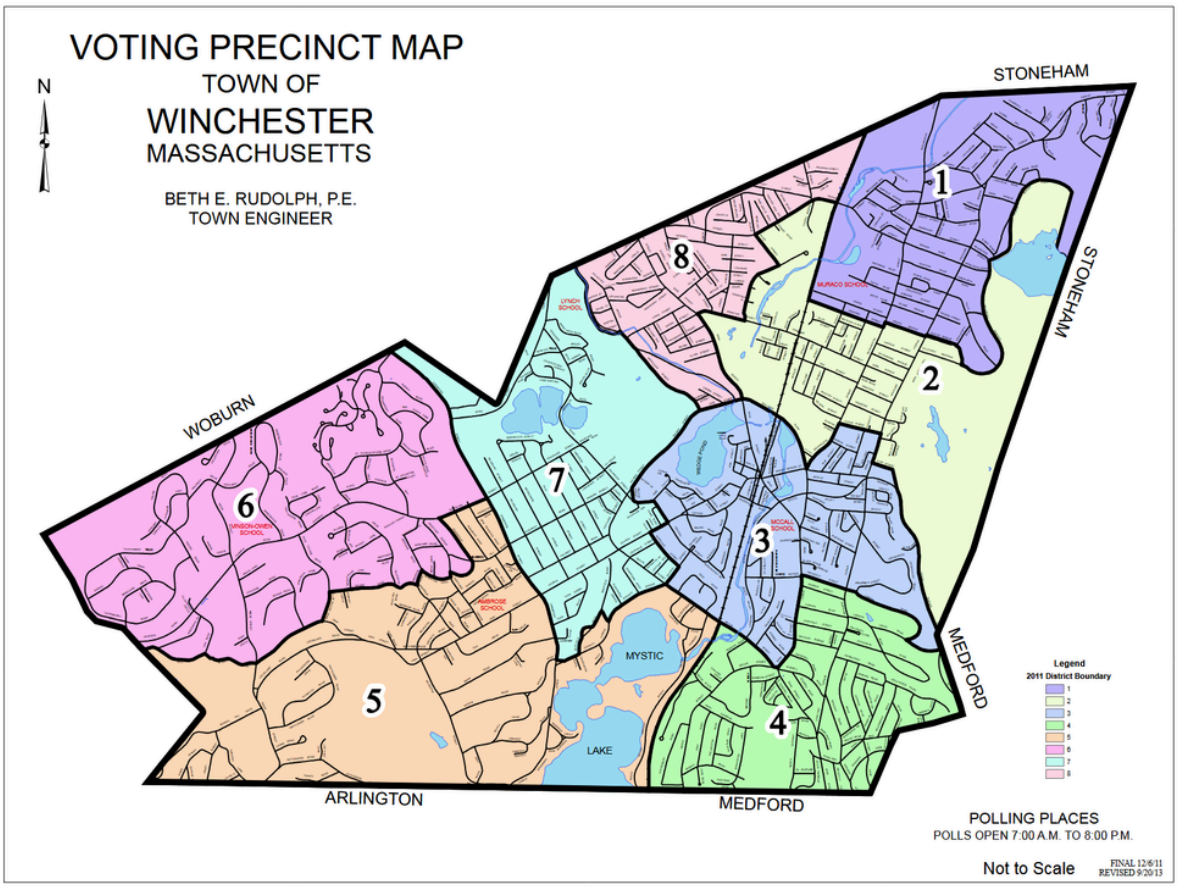

Town clerk seeks poll workers

The Town Clerk's Office is also seeking poll workers for the 2026 election season, citing expanded responsibilities under the Voter Act of 2022. Positions include Election Day workers at Winchester High School, central ballot tabulation staff at Town Hall and early voting and mail-in ballot workers. Applicants must be registered Massachusetts voters and able to work professionally with the public. Applications are available the Town Clerk's Office at 71 Mt. Vernon St. and online.

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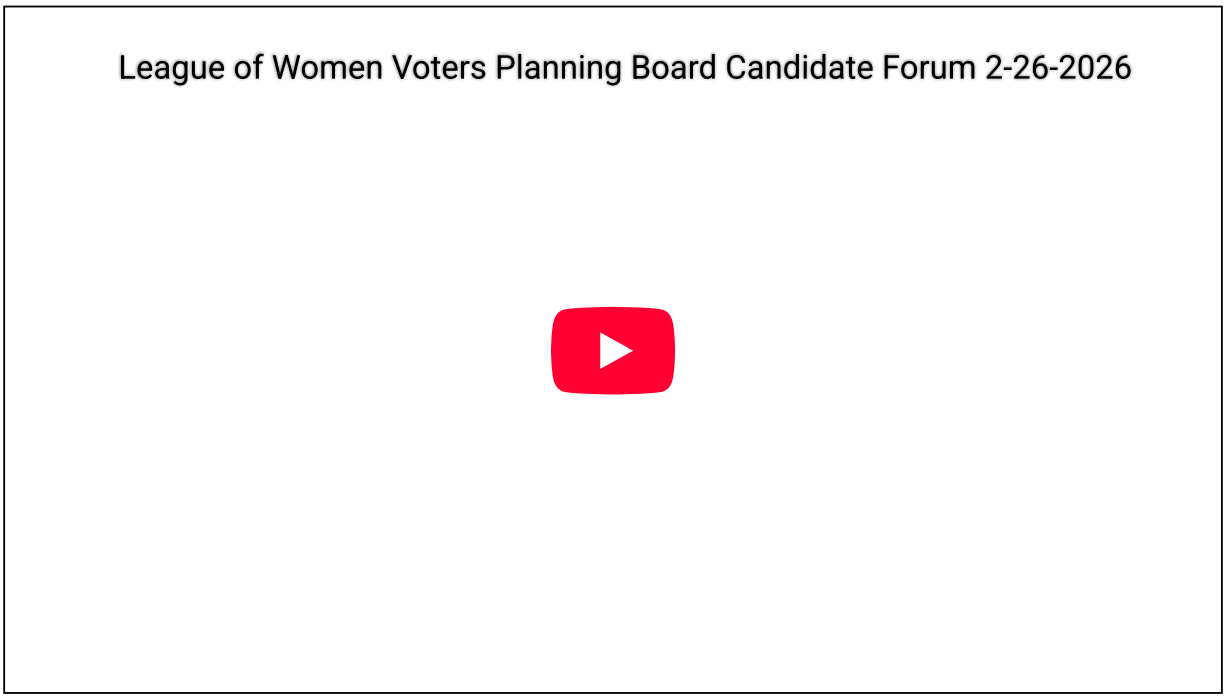
Debates and forums

The League of Women Voters of Winchester and Winchester News are collaborating to hold two candidate forums before the March 21 town election. Both events include informal meet-the-candidates opportunities for Town Meeting races in all precincts. Links to video recordings of candidate debates will be posted here once available from WinCam.

Thursday, Feb. 26
The Jenks Center, Cummings Room, 109 Skillings Road
6:30-7 p.m.: Meet Town Meeting candidates — all precincts
7-8 p.m.: Planning Board debate (two seats): Amy Beliveau, Keri Layton, Nicholas Rossettos



Thursday, March 5
The Jenks Center, Cummings Room, 109 Skillings Road
6:15-6:45 p.m.: Meet Town Meeting candidates — all precincts
6:45-8 p.m.: School Committee debate (one seat): John Bellaire a

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Heather K.R. Von Mering; Select Board debate (one seat): Shamus Brady and Michelle Prior

Candidates for townwide offices

The League and the Winchester News will send out questionnaires to all candidates running for townwide offices, asking about their backgrounds, qualifications and positions on key issues facing Winchester. Candidate profiles will be published according to the following schedule:

Feb. 2
List of candidates who submitted nomination papers published

Feb. 24
Deadline for candidates to submit profile information

Late February
All candidate profiles published online

Readers will be able to then click on a candidate's name below to read their biographical information and positions on key issues facing Winchester.

Select Board (one seat, three-year term)
— Michelle Prior (incumbent)
— Shamus Brady

> *The Select Board serves as the town's chief executive body, overseeing the town manager, setting policy priorities and managing Winchester's more than $100 million annual budget.*

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School Committee (one seat, three-year term)
— John Bellaire

— Heather K.R. von Mering

> *The School Committee oversees Winchester Public Schools, approves the school budget, sets education policy and hires the superintendent.*

Planning Board (two seats, three-year terms)
— Keri Layton (incumbent)
— Nicholas Rossettos (incumbent)
— Amy Beliveau

> *The Planning Board reviews and approves development projects, creates the master plan and oversees zoning changes to shape Winchester's physical development.*

Board of Health (one seat, three-year term)
— Dr. Gregory Sawicki (incumbent)

> *The Board of Health protects public health through oversight of food establishments, housing inspections, disease surveillance and environmental health matters.*

Board of Assessors (one seat, three-year term)
— Richard Michienzi (incumbent)

> *The Board of Assessors determines property values for tax purposes, reviews abatement requests and ensures fair and equitable property assessments across town.*

Housing Authority (one seat, one-year term)
— Brenda Kleschinsky

> *The Housing Authority manages Winchester's public housing, over*
> *affordable housing programs and works to address housing needs for low*

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> *income residents.*

Library Board of Trustees (two seats, three-year terms)
— Katherine Ho

> *The Library Board of Trustees oversees Winchester Public Library operations, sets library policy, approves the library budget and hires the library director.*

Town Moderator (one seat, one-year term)
— Philip Frattaroli (incumbent)

> *The town moderator presides over all town meetings, maintains order during debates, rules on parliamentary procedure and ensures fair and efficient conduct of town meeting business.*

Candidates for Town Meeting

Winchester operates under a representative town meeting system that serves as the town's legislative body. Unlike open town meetings, where all residents can vote, Winchester's system consists of elected representatives who make decisions on town budgets, bylaws and major policies on behalf of their constituents. Out of 351 communities in Massachusetts, only 32 operate under a representative format.

Winchester Town Meeting is composed of 192 members, divided equally among the town's eight precincts. Each precinct elects 24 representatives to ensure balanced representation. Terms are staggered so that one-third of the seats — eight per precinct — are up for election each year, with members serving three-year terms. This system maintains continuity while allowing for consistent renewal of representation.

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In this election cycle, 69 town meeting member seats are up for e
across Winchester's eight precincts. Each precinct has eight three-year

terms available. Additionally, Precinct 2 has one two-year vacancy, Precinct 3 has one one-year vacancy and Precinct 5 has three one-year vacancies.

Town Meeting candidate lists will be published after nomination papers are certified in early February. The League of Women of Voters and Winchester News will send out questionnaires to all candidates running for Town Meeting, and candidate profiles will be published online in late February. **Town Meeting candidate profiles are posted here** and by precinct - click on the Precinct number below:
Precinct 1 (eight seats, three-year terms)
Precinct 2 (eight seats, three-year terms; one seat, two-year term)
Precinct 3 (eight seats, three-year terms; one seat, one-year term)
Precinct 4 (eight seats, three-year terms)
Precinct 5 (eight seats, three-year terms; three seats, one-year terms)
Precinct 6 (eight seats, three-year terms)
Precinct 7 (eight seats, three-year terms)
Precinct 8 (eight seats, three-year terms)

Write-in candidate opportunities

Several races on the March 21 ballot have fewer candidates running than seats available. The following offices have write-in opportunities:

— Library Board of Trustees (two seats, three-year terms): One candidate on ballot
— Precinct 2 Town Meeting, two-year term: No candidates on ballot
— Precinct 8 Town Meeting, three-year term (eight seats up for election): Seven candidates on ballot

The town clerk encourages anyone planning to run a write-in campaign to contact their office to register their intent. The League of Women Voters of Winchester and Winchester News will publish candidate profiles f candidates planning a write-in campaign.

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The Prop. 2 1/2 override

This election won't just be about candidates. Winchester voters will also decide on a proposed $11.5 million Proposition 2½ override that would increase the town's tax levy capacity and affect town and school budgets — and likely property tax bills — over the next several years.

At its Feb. 12 meeting, the Winchester Select Board reached consensus on an override totaling $11.5 million, split into $9 million for operations and $2.5 million for capital stabilization. Operating funds are intended to provide a three- to four-year runway for town and school services. Capital funds would be divided between the building stabilization fund and capital stabilization fund for facilities needs, including Town Hall restoration and school infrastructure.

Based on projections presented during deliberations, the override would raise the average single-family tax bill by about $1,006 in FY2027 and $1,463 in FY2028 (about $122 per month at midpoint estimates), with impacts varying by assessed value.

Board members framed the proposal as a response to structural budget pressures — including school staffing, municipal services and long-term capital needs. Discussion focused on how much of a cushion to seek versus relying on cost controls and projected revenue growth.

As part of the final consensus, the board also voted to create a transfer station working group to boost commercial revenue, cap municipal health insurance expense growth at 12% annually and sponsor a Spring Town Meeting article to replenish the health care stabilization fund using available override revenue.

For full projections, modeling, and supporting materials, visit the town's State of the Town page.

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2026 town election coverage

This collection brings together Winchester News coverage leading up to the March 21 municipal election. It includes reporting on who is running, how to vote, key deadlines and the major policy questions framing the ballot. The page will be updated as new information becomes available, reporting takes place and will remain active through certification of the final results.

Feb. 13 — Winchester Select Board settles on $11.5M override after marathon negotiation

Feb. 13 — 2026 Town Election Guide now live, designed as ongoing civic information hub

Feb. 10 — Winchester Special Town Meeting sharpens override debate as Select Board weighs final price tag

Feb. 6 — Incumbents, newcomers appear on certified list after nomination deadline

Jan. 28 — Select Board debates Winchester property tax override, members split on amount

Jan. 26 — Who has pulled nomination papers so far for 2026 Winchester town election?

Jan. 15 — Winchester Select Board schedules Special Town Meeting on fiscal challenges

Jan. 7 — Winchester school officials seek $4.5M to fund literacy, equity improvements

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Dec. 15 — Want to run in Winchester? Nomination papers open Jan. 2 for

2026 town election

Sept. 23 — State of Town Committee charting Winchester override strategy

Related

NEWS

Winchester Town Clerk: Early voting begins March 14

The following was submitted by the Winchester Town Clerk's Office: Did you know that you can cast a vote early for the upcoming Annual Town Election? Election laws were amended years ago and allow for voters to cast ballots several ways. The world is a busy place with family,

March 2, 2026

NEWS

Winchester seeks poll workers for 2026 election season

The Town Clerk's Office is seeking workers for the upcoming 2026 election season to assist staff with election administration. Officials cited changes in many election laws in the recent Voter Act of 2022 as a reason for the variety of available positions. The town is looking for serious applicants

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March 2, 2026

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NEWS

Winchester Planning Board candidates debate housing growth and historic preservation

Three candidates for two open seats on the Winchester Planning Board debated housing production, zoning reform and growth Feb. 26 at a forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Winchester. Incumbents Nicholas Rossettos and Keri Layton were joined by challenger Amy Beliveau at the Jenks Center, moderated by

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GOVERNMENT

Candidate profiles now available in 2026 election guide

Candidate profiles for both the town wide and Town Meeting member races are now live in the Winchester News/League of Women Voters of Winchester 2026 Election Guide. While the deadline for submission was Feb. 24, if a candidate has not turned in their profile and/or headshot, they may

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February 25, 2026

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‘Chicago: Teen Edition’ dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS
March 4, 2026

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

March 4, 2026

NEWS

Winchester gun owners face new training rules starting April 2

Public safety data How Winchester compares on firearms licenses in comparable Massachusetts communities Active licenses as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

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